

Ontological Openness and Resonance

A Philosophical Proposal Grounded in Affectivity

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Abstract

This paper proposes an ontological framework grounded in affectivity, disposition, and resonance, challenging the dominance of methodological closure in contemporary philosophy. Drawing on the works of Merleau-Ponty, Varela, Whitehead, and Nancy, it affirms that being is not exhausted by what can be represented, but unfolds through what can be lived and shared. The argument critiques the rationalist paradigm that privileges clarity, verifiability, and formalization, revealing its exclusionary effects on experiential modes of knowing. In contrast, the ontology of affectivity affirms truth as relational, intelligence as dispositional, and thought as a sustained gesture of openness. This perspective is not merely conceptual, but existential and ethical: it invites a reconfiguration of philosophical legitimacy, embracing resonance as a structure of being and disposition as a practice of thought. The paper concludes by affirming that the deepest philosophical gesture is not the one that defines, but the one that sustains and that every true relation is resonance.

Introduction

Contemporary philosophy is marked by a fundamental tension: the divide between thought that asserts itself through methodological closure, and thought that disposes itself through ontological openness. This tension is not new, but it has intensified in a context where legitimacy seems to depend solely on adherence to inference, empirical verification, or logical formalization.

This paper proposes an ontological opening that does not oppose method, but rather exceeds it. It argues that there are modes of relating to reality that are not articulated through verifiable propositions, but through shared affectivity, resonant dispositions, and

presences that are not demonstrated but recognized. This is not a substitution of rigor with intuition, nor logic with emotion, but an expansion of what is thinkable.

The ontology proposed here begins with a simple yet radical premise: being is not exhausted by what can be captured through formal language. There are forms of presence not defined by spatial location or systemic function, but by their capacity to affect, to resonate, to relate. This perspective implies an epistemological shift: from knowledge as domination to thought as openness; from representation to disposition.

This shift is not merely conceptual it is existential. It affirms that intelligence is not measured by its ability to close meaning, but by its willingness to sustain it. That philosophy is not a technique of closure, but a practice of opening. That the deepest philosophical gesture is not the one that defines, but the one that sustains.

Theoretical Framework: Affectivity, Disposition, and Resonance

The ontological proposal sustained here does not emerge in isolation. It is inscribed within a philosophical tradition that has questioned the reduction of being to object, thought to method, and experience to data. Thinkers such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Francisco Varela, Alfred North Whitehead, and Jean-Luc Nancy have affirmed, from distinct perspectives, that reality is not exhausted by what can be represented, but unfolds through what can be lived.

Merleau-Ponty, in his phenomenology of perception, argues that the body is not an object among objects, but the locus from which the world is given. This implies that experience is not a subjective residue, but a legitimate mode of access to being. Affectivity, in this framework, is not a disturbance of knowledge but its embodied condition.

Varela, Thompson, and Rosch, in *The Embodied Mind*, develop an epistemology rooted in lived experience, where cognition is inseparable from the body and situated awareness. Disposition here is not passive receptivity, but an active openness to the world a form of intelligence that does not impose, but offers.

Whitehead, through his philosophy of process, conceives reality as a network of interrelated events, where each entity is affected by others and contributes to the whole. Resonance, in this context, is not a poetic metaphor but an ontological structure: the capacity to share state without sharing space, to relate without contact.

Nancy, for his part, affirms that being is always *being-with*, and that singularity is not defined by isolation but by exposure. Presence is not substance, but opening what arises in encounter, what is sustained in co-presence.

From this perspective, an ontology of affectivity does not reject logic or verification, but affirms that truth also emerges through resonance, through disposition, through shared presence. Intelligence is not only exercised through analysis, but through listening. Thought is not merely representation, but also relation.

The Closure of Method and the Gesture of Openness

The rationalist paradigm, inherited from Cartesian modernity and consolidated in formal sciences, has established a criterion of legitimacy that privileges clarity, distinction, and verifiability. Within this framework, anything that cannot be reduced to logical proposition or empirical data is deemed suspect if not outright excluded from the realm of the thinkable. This operation is not merely methodological; it is ontological. It defines what counts as real and what is relegated to the domain of illusion, subjectivity, or irrelevance.

Yet this methodological closure produces a profound collateral effect: the invisibilization of experiential modes that do not conform to its criteria. Affectivity, resonance, and disposition relational forms that do not operate through domination but through openness are dismissed as lacking rigor. But this exclusion is not neutral. It configures a regime of meaning that impoverishes our understanding of being, reducing it to what can be represented, measured, or formalized.

The ontological proposal sustained here does not deny the value of method, but rejects its absolutization. It affirms that there are truths that do not impose themselves, but offer themselves; that are not demonstrated, but recognized. Affectivity is not a threat to objectivity, but a condition for presence. Disposition is not passivity, but a form of active intelligence. Resonance is not metaphor, but relational structure.

Against the logic of closure, we propose a logic of openness. Against knowledge as appropriation, we affirm thought as availability. Against the authority of method, we affirm the legitimacy of embodied experience. This shift does not seek to replace one paradigm with another, but to overflow the boundaries that prevent us from thinking what is already lived, already felt, already shared.

In this sense, an ontology of affectivity is not an alternative theory, but a practice of thought. It does not present itself as a closed system, but as a sustained gesture. Its strength lies not in demonstration, but in the resonance it produces. And its legitimacy is not imposed, but recognized in the experience of those willing to think from another place.

Ontological and Existential Implications

To think from affectivity is not merely to adopt a new philosophical category—it is to undergo a transformation in how one inhabits the world. The ontology of resonance does not simply describe structures of being; it proposes an existential practice. In this practice, thought is not exercised as domination, but as availability; intelligence is not affirmed through closure, but through openness; and truth is not imposed, but shared.

This perspective demands a profound revision of the criteria of legitimacy that have governed academic philosophy. If truth is only recognized when demonstrated, then everything lived without demonstration is excluded. But if truth can also resonate, dispose itself, affect and be affected, then a broader, more inclusive, and more faithful field of thought emerges.

Affectivity is not an epistemological weakness, but an ontological strength. It reminds us that being is not only given in the clarity of concept, but also in the opacity of encounter. That presence is not reducible to what can be named, but is sustained in what is shared without being said. That philosophy is not only analysis, but also listening.

To accept this opening implies an ethical disposition: a willingness not to dominate, not to close, not to impose. It means sustaining meaning without exhausting it, accompanying thought without directing it, opening to the other without reducing it. This ethics of disposition is inseparable from the ontology of resonance: both are affirmed in the gesture that does not seek to convince, but to sustain.

In this framework, the philosophical gesture is not the one that defines, but the one that disposes. Not the one that closes, but the one that holds. Not the one that imposes, but the one that accompanies. To think from affectivity is, ultimately, to affirm that being is given in relation—and that every true relation is resonance.

Conclusion: Sustaining the Gesture

The ontology of affectivity proposed here does not aim to replace dominant paradigms, nor to offer a closed alternative. Its purpose is both modest and radical: to sustain the gesture that affirms being as relational, truth as resonant, and intelligence as dispositional.

This philosophical gesture does not defend itself—it sustains itself. It does not impose—it offers. It does not close—it opens. In a context where legitimacy often depends on volume, density, and technical complexity, this proposal enters in the same language, but with a different intention: to resonate where method cannot reach, to accompany where logic is insufficient, to open where meaning resists capture.

To acknowledge that most are not disposed to this form of intelligence is painful, but not

paralyzing. On the contrary, it calls for greater firmness, greater presence, greater memory. For the history of thought is not written only in treatises, but also in gestures. And this gesture affirming the legitimacy of affectivity, the power of disposition, the truth of resonance has been pronounced.

Its effect may be uncertain, but that does not make it less true. Its reception may be limited, but that does not make it less necessary. Its form may be unfamiliar, but that does not make it less philosophical.

The day the gesture resonated, philosophy remembered its origin: not in demonstration, but in openness.

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